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General Assembly

Seventy-first session

Official Records

9th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 20 September 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

Address by Mr. Béji Caïd Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Béji Caïd Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia.

Béji Caïd Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Béji Caïd Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Essebsi (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, at the outset, to express to you, President Thomson, and through you to your country, our congratulations on the trust placed in you to guide the work of this session. We have great hopes that this session will help us embed the principles underpinning the Organization and the General Assembly. We very much hope that this occasion will also be an opportunity to promote international collaboration. I would also like to express to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon my most sincere thanks and appreciation for all of his great efforts for the good of peoples around the world, as well as his promotion of the noble principles of the United Nations.

This session is taking place at the same time as the celebration of independence of the State of Tunisia — 60 years of independence as a modern country. It is 60 years since we joined the United Nations, and this is an opportunity for us to reiterate how much Tunisia is committed to the purposes and principles behind the creation of the Organization. We are fully prepared to pursue assistance to the Organization so that the United Nations can accomplish its noble goal of promoting peace, security, human rights and development throughout the world.

Tunisia has had the unique experience of building democracy based on national accord so that we can overcome differences in political opinion. That has allowed us to see major political accomplishments. We have a new, modern Constitution. We have held legislative and presidential elections that were witnessed by the entire world and declared transparent, free and fair. That has increased our confidence in ourselves and has made us more able to face up to the challenges we face. It also led to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015, which in turn enabled us to rectify our political trajectory to overcome a political impasse.

Our democratic experience in Tunisia has had major achievements, but we still need support. Given our fragile economy, we still need to strengthen our democracy. Five years have already gone by since the 2011 Tunisian revolution, but we are still facing enormous challenges on the path towards achieving an economic revival and improving living standards.

We have launched an ambitious initiative to meet the expectations of the Tunisian people. We called for

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the establishment of a Government of national unity that would be capable of satisfying our needs at this stage in our history: winning the fight against terrorism, accelerating coordination between development and growth, stimulating job creation, fighting corruption and laying the foundations for good governance and for the implementation of effective social policies.

This initiative has enjoyed broad support from political parties and different national organizations. It led to the establishment of a Government of national unity, with robust participation by women, headed by a young leader. This reflects our determination to allow young people and women to assume important roles in this democratic experience. Tunisia left authoritarianism behind in 2011, and our country is now under the rule of law. We reiterate our determination to move forward toward further democracy and freedom and to face up to all attempts to take us back in time.

Of course, we are still a young country. We are facing major economic and social challenges of an unprecented scale that jeopardize our path to the future, especially given the regional context, particularly regional terrorism. That requires us to seek robust support from our partners so that we can overcome the challenges and osbtacles and make headway on internal development and create jobs for young people, particularly those with qualifications.

On 29 and 30 November, Tunisia will host an international conference to support the economy and seek investment. Participants will include Heads of State and Government, representatives of international organizations, investment funds, civil society representatives and representatives from the public and private sectors. It will be an opportunity for our brothers and friends to express their support and solidarity with Tunisia, including their support for democracy in our country at this particularly critical point in time.

This year's general debate is of particular importance, especially following the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals. It is of particular importance because it is linked to the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Tunisia also adopted ambitious goals in establishing our own development plan. We will spare no effort to make the 2030 Agenda a reality.

We call upon all partners to redouble their efforts to assist developing countries as they seek to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including by providing them with the support they are counting on — especially for African countries, which are encountering many economic, social and environmental difficulties. Those challenges require robust assistance from the international community so that African communities and countries can achieve development. We need to make certain that we can do that in order to ensure that we have peace, stability and security and so that we can prevent conflicts and confront terrorism and extremism.

Today, we renew our commitment to the African Union Agenda 2063, which is the sum of our ambitions and our dedication. Given the close link between peace, security and development, we also renew our commitment to strengthening our participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations and to taking a more active role in capacity-building within the African continent, including on military assistance.

The Arab world is seeing an increase in violence and conflict, which is a major source of concern. Violence, extremism and terrorism are spreading. We have seen that lead to an increase in organized criminal activity, which is destabilizing every one of our countries without exception. The lack of stability in the Arab world is just a part of the instability found throughout the world. Therefore, we call upon everyone to find urgent political solutions to all the issues concerning the region. First and foremost is the Palestinian question, which requires a fair, comprehensive solution that will provide justice for the Palestinian people, bring an end to their suffering and allow them to obtain their historic legitimate rights, in particular the establishment of an independent State, with Al-Quds as its capital, in conformity with related international decisions.

We are greatly concerned by the crisis in Libya, and our concerns will remain while instability reigns in that brotherly country, with all the implications that it can have for our security and our economy. We are firmly committed to promoting reconciliation and agreement between the different parties in Libya so that they can implement all phases of the Libyan Political Agreement, signed in 17 December 2015, under the auspices of the United Nations. We shall also continue our support for the Government of National Accord so that it can assume its responsibilities and accomplish its role in re-establishing peace, stability and security and in combating terrorism and improving the living standards of the Libyan people.

We are following with concern the evolution of the situations in Syria and Yemen. We are concerned about the implications for security and the humanitarian disaster resulting from those conflicts. We need a political solution to the situations in those two countries so that they can maintain their unity and territorial integrity in order to ensure peace.

Mr. Onyeama (Nigeria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

I stand here before the Assembly as we commemorate our independence and the sixtieth anniversary of our accession to the Organization. That reminds me of the founder of modern Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba, who in a speech confirmed that Tunisia, having recovered its independence, declared its complete commitment to the purposes and principles and the noble humanitarian values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Today, as we begin a new chapter in our history — our ancient history — with many efforts to advance democracy and the protection and promotion of human rights, we again affirm our determination to create a conducive environment for our citizens to be able to live in dignity. As Tunisia grounds itself on the efforts of the Tunisian people, with the support of our brothers and partners, we firmly believe that those efforts will be successful in contributing to security and peace in the region and worldwide.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Tunisia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Béji Caid Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Poland.

Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Duda (*spoke in Polish; interpretation provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, on his election to his important position. I assure him of my country's full support for his effort. At the same time, I wish to express my warm gratitude to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft for his active presidency during the seventieth session, during which I was honoured to take part for the first time in my capacity as the President of the Republic of Poland.

Sustainable development, the protection of human rights, and peace and security are the goals pursued by the United Nations the achievement of which humankind deeply yearns. By adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the new Sustainable Development Goals last year, we demonstrated that we are capable of acting together as an international community to achieve success, implement the required tasks and, at the same time, approach new ambitious goals.

I wish to address the three foundations of sustainable development, without which such development will never be possible. It is my profound conviction that these are the rules with which we should all identify if we truly care about human happiness and the successful progress of our nations. These three rules — the three foundations of sustainable development — are responsibility, solidarity and justice.

Responsibility arises from our obligation to safeguard the heritage that we are going to leave to our children and grandchildren: how we are going to be remembered by them and what they are going to write about us in history books. Responsibility is underpinned by the conviction that history neither begins nor ends here and now, but is a succession of generations, destinies and commitments.

Understood in that way, responsibility nowadays pertains in particular to social issues and the natural environment. Responsible development is development that cares for the appropriate continuity to be preserved between generations — past, present and future. As in an Olympic relay, the smooth handing off of the baton is of key importance when one approaches the changeover box.

On many occasions, as history has illustrated, this historical continuity is interrupted. This is what happens when people want to build too rapidly while

destroying what our forebearers left behind, acting against their beliefs and their sense of rightness. When order gives in to chaos, social bonds are destroyed and fear and anxiety are aroused. When respect for tradition is absent and social engineering is used instead, development itself is not possible, let alone sustainable development.

Progress that does not create but destroys is in fact regression. Family is the basic form of human community that harmoniously links together succeeding generations. That is why solicitude for its durability and welfare is so crucially significant. Human rights are also family rights, and their attainment involves active support for a multigenerational society. The main instrument of the latter is a pro-family policy.

I am proud to declare that the authorities of the Republic of Poland are now carrying out an ambitious programme for improving the living conditions of children in Polish families. The groundwork underpinning any development is the creation of appropriate conditions for the conception of new life.

The second challenge to sustainable development, one which also calls for responsible policies, is care for the natural environment. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will not be possible without fighting the degradation of nature — an effort to be undertaken with determination and consistency. We were reminded by Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Laudato si'*, that the natural environment is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all.

The immensity of the challenges we face can be best illustrated by the fact that, at the recent International Geological Congress, scholars came to the conclusion that we might describe a new geological era, termed Anthropocene. For the very first time in the history of the Earth, this era has not been determined by geological but by human activity.

We realize what grave environmental consequences changes in the natural environment produce. However, their social, economic and political ramifications are of equal importance. We can already ask ourselves whether we are threatened by climate wars. This is precisely why only global actions undertaken in concord by all States can bring about improvement in the condition of nature on our Earth.

Last year in Paris we jointly demonstrated that we are capable of taking responsible decisions by adopting a new climate agreement. The Republic of Poland was an active participant in those negotiations. I wish to inform the Assembly that Poland has initiated the process of ratifying the Paris Agreement and the Doha Amendment. As President of the Republic of Poland, I attach great importance to its conclusion as quickly as possible, in line with the provisions of our Constitution.

Responsibility for the natural environment, however, involves more than the mere prevention of climate change. In line with the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it also includes protecting the water and the soil and fighting desertification. Responsible development requires a balanced approach, and therefore the natural environment should be viewed from the three perspectives of water, soil and air.

If it is to be sustainable, development must also take into account the specificity of individual countries, particularly their economic and employment structures.

The second pillar of sustainable development is solidarity. This concept is particularly close to the hearts of the Polish people, who, led by the social movement bearing the same name, carried out a peaceful political transformation a quarter of a century ago, rejecting the system founded on lies and enslavement. It is thanks to a community that is sensitive to the misfortunes of others and respectful of all people, regardless of their origin or financial situation, that Polish solidarity is built upon such durable foundations. Today the Republic of Poland implements the principle of solidarity on two planes: domestic, and global.

Solidarity is a development undertaken in the name of welfare for all social groups, not only those that are strongest and most influential. Politics operating in the spirit of solidarity are politics that care for the weakest, not the strongest. That is why it must rely on solidarity between employers and employees, and solidarity between more developed and less developed regions.

Finally, the most fundamental solidarity is a solidarity with those who have a sense of attainment, with those who struggle to survive each and every day. Only a development model founded on solidarity is capable of producing a system where man, his needs and his aspirations are at its centre. This system must afford equal opportunities to all and allow us to tap into the potential represented by those who have thus far been living in social exclusion.

It is the concept of development founded on solidarity that lies at the heart of the policies pursued by Poland's present Government. In line with its tenets, improvement of the quality of life of all citizens should arise from the measures taken by the Government, and not just macroeconomic indicators, which are often insufficient in translating the advancement of the former.

We do not want to be captives of economic dogmas; we want solutions that allow the active participation of all social groups in development processes, giving them equal opportunity to benefit from economic growth. Such solutions will produce the expected outcomes for restraining exclusion and poverty and for levelling out social inequalities.

Our policy is therefore consistent with the ambitious vision of the 2030 Agenda, which we jointly decided to implement one year ago. I think the time has come to start a global coalition of States for the solidarity-based development of societies. Solidarity in international relations is, first and foremost, humanitarian and developmental aid in all territories affected by military conflicts, economic crises or natural disasters.

The unprecedented scale of migration flows in the contemporary world — a phenomenon that we need to confront directly — is a reminder of our great shared responsibility: to begin actions to eliminate the real roots of poverty and to guarantee everyone the right to live in his or her own home country.

Poland has been watching with anxiety and concern the growing number of people affected by conflicts, especially in Syria and in Ukraine. Guided by our sense of solidarity, we have increased our humanitarian and development aid in the Middle East region and to the East.

In our efforts to build peace and sustainable development, we attach great importance to the education of children and young people. That is why we provide financial support to education projects in Africa. My country has been, and will continue to be, an active advocate for solidarity in the international arena.

The third pillar of sustainable development is justice. A just and equitable order, where the sustainable development model can be delivered, is founded on respect for human rights and the law of nations. Individual freedom, the dignity of the human person, the inviolability of human life and freedom of conscience and religion are all constituent parts of the catalogue of inalienable human rights, which nowadays call for particular protection. There are far too many places around the world where freedom is restricted by an oppressive political system, human dignity is violated and humankind's most fundamental right — the right to life — is encroached upon.

Our fundamental objection is that there are so many places in the world where people die because of the religion they profess, which is only a matter of conscience. We cannot stay silent in the face of suffering Christians who are murdered in the name of religious fanaticism. The world must react to the phenomenon of religion-based genocide, which has become increasingly common.

That is why Poland welcomed with particular satisfaction the fact that the protection of human rights has been given pride of place among the priorities of the new development agenda. Through our global agreement, we have jointly reaffirmed the interdependence that exists between development and human rights and freedoms. Only through respect for all human rights — political, social, economic and cultural — can we fully harness human potential and eventually implement the sustainable development model. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that all human rights are derived from the most fundamental one, namely, the right to life.

Our endeavours to make the world a better place to live will be futile, however, if we are incapable of safeguarding the absolute primacy of international law in relations among States. Last year, in this very Hall, I spoke about the need to ground international relations in law (see A/70/PV.13). I went on to emphasize that all States were equally obligated to carry out their international commitments and that any actions violating provisions of international law, among them political sovereignty and territorial integrity in particular, should be categorically denounced by the global community.

Today, I wish to reiterate, in the clearest terms, that we must abide by the rules, a principle best expressed by a Roman proverb, "ex injuria jus non oritur", meaning that law cannot arise from illegal acts. A non-agressor has a right to the territory he occupies. We reject the system by which it is the politics of force and aggression that decides a nation's destiny. Peace and security are two fundamental preconditions for

sustainable development. The effectiveness of global action in that regard will depend on international solidarity and concerted action among States.

In the meantime, any act of aggression that encroaches on international commitments undermines mutual trust among States and societies. It undermines the order that was so strenuously built in the wake of the Second World War. That is why it is so crucially important to ensure that the policy of force will always be met with the decisive opposition of the international community. For the law to be effective, any violation thereof must absolutely trigger the execution of significant countermeasures.

I also wish to highlight the fact that the realization of the principle of justice in international relations is equally jeopardized if we decide to base it on the division of spheres of influence among super-Powers, for proxy wars would break out, respect for the subjective status of weaker States would disappear and the freedom and equality of States and nations would be encroached upon. Let us recall than any instance of peace made at the expense of someone else's freedom can hardly ever last and is never equitable.

This year, my country has hosted two events that restore faith in the power of international cooperation among States and nations. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit in July testified to NATO's unity in the effort to build peace and freedom in the trans-Atlantic space. It was an expression of the failed responsibility of NATO countries that led to an agreement resulting in Europe's heightened security. The outcomes of the Warsaw Summit are an expression of allied solidarity and respect for the independence of free nations, and hence the values that underpin equitable international order.

Soon after the NATO Summit, in my hometown of Krakow, we celebrated International Youth Day, during which young people from all over the world met with Pope Francis. Those days were a time of celebration, a time of joy, friendship and love. The young people who gathered in Poland taught us that the road to peace begins with human solidarity, based on concern for others regardless of origin or religion.

Responsibility, solidarity and justice are the pillars on which Poland would like to build an international community for the sustainable development of free nations and equal States.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Poland for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Zuma: I wish to congratulate the President on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. I assure him of South Africa's continued support in the implementation of his priorities and responsibilities throughout his term. We also commend Mr. Mogens Lykketoft of Denmark for his able stewardship of the General Assembly during its historic seventieth session.

The year 2016 is an important year in South Africa, as we mark two significant historic anniversaries in our country. We recently marked the sixtieth anniversary of the 1956 Women's March against discriminatory and racist laws, and the fortieth anniversary of the youth uprising against apartheid of 16 June 1976. Those two events marked significant turning points in the history of our struggle against apartheid minority rule in our country. The Women's March brought into sharp focus the gender dimension of the struggle and the equal role of women in the fight against white domination, oppression and injustice. Equally, the youth uprising 40 years ago highlighted and cemented the role of young people in fighting for liberation and a better society.

We are reminded of those two milestones as we address the theme of this debate: "The Sustainable Development Goals: a universal push to transform our world". Last year, world leaders marked the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations by adopting the 2030

Agenda, that is, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We committed ourselves to an ambitious and transformative global development programme that seeks to address the triple challenge of this century, which is poverty, unemployment and inequality. To a great extent, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) played a critical role in galvanizing Governments and communities all over the world to put in place programmes and policies aimed at poverty eradication and addressing socioeconomic development, particularly in Africa.

It is a well-known reality that our continent, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, did not achieve the targets that were set in the MDGs. It was for that reason that we insisted that the Sustainable Development Goals should continue the unfinished business of the MDGs. We therefore have an interest in ensuring the full implementation of the SDGs as we take forward the agenda of promoting Africa's sustainable development.

We have made significant strides in the past couple of decades in reversing the impact of underdevelopment and the legacies of colonialism and apartheid in Africa. If the African continent is to develop faster, we need to address certain constraints. That includes inadequate infrastructure; high dependency on primary products; high exposure to commodity-price volatility; limited investment in research and development, science, innovation and technology; and low private-sector investment, as well as the need to continue improving skills. To respond to some of those constraints, the continent has embarked upon a number of initiatives, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative, the African Mining Vision and the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa.

In South Africa, we have put in place a national development plan that is aligned with both Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Sustainable Development Goals. At the core of our development plan is a focus on poverty eradication and raising the standard of living of our people. Our national development plan is also in line with the drive for the industrialization of Africa. That will contribute to eradicating poverty and reducing inequality and unemployment, and will also contribute to global growth and prosperity. It is therefore imperative that Africa and the least developed countries, which were left behind in previous industrialisation processes, not be excluded from the fourth, or new, industrial revolution.

The successful implementation of Africa's development plans depends on the availability of resources. We are therefore seriously concerned about the loss of the continent's resources through illicit financial flows. The joint African Union-United Nations Economic Commission for Africa High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa estimates that illicit flows from Africa could amount to as much as $50 billion per year. Illicit financial flows deprive developing countries of economic resources that are much needed to uplift their economies in order to provide infrastructure and basic services, such as education and health care. We urge the world at large to treat this problem with the seriousness and urgency that it deserves.

We also need to close the gap that has painfully divided people between rich and the poor and divided countries between big and small economies. Global inequality and economic exclusion have become a serious threat to global peace and stability. Inclusive growth is therefore a peace, security and prosperity imperative. However, inclusive growth will remain a distant dream if powerful nations continue to put their national interests ahead of the global collective interest.

The African continent remains committed, through the African Union and its Peace and Security Architecture, to resolving the remaining conflicts. We have committed ourselves to silencing the guns by 2020. We appeal to the Security Council in particular to support African peace operations so that we can achieve that noble goal. The situations in Libya, South Sudan and the Central African Republic remain a continental priority. We strongly urge the Security Council to better align and coordinate with the African Union in efforts to bring about peace in those sister countries and on the continent at large.

Beyond the continent, we remain concerned about threats of terrorism. Fifteen years after the 11 September terrorist attacks on the United States, international terrorism remains a challenge that no single country or region has been able to deal with successfully. We have witnessed the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and are horrified by its brutal and senseless killings. The conflicts in both Libya and Syria have provided fertile ground for the terrorists to carry out their unjustified terrorist activities.

In less than five years, the conflict in Syria has led to chaos in that country, with a devastating effect on

the stability of the region. The deadlock in the Security Council on the Syrian question exposes the inherent structural dysfunction of the 1945 post-Second World War consensus. We must therefore ask ourselves if the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council as currently configured, can fulfil its mandate in addressing the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Security Council is supposed to act in our collective interests, without being bogged down by the narrow domestic interests of a few States. It is imperative and urgent that the United Nations be reformed, and in particular the Council. South Africa has been calling, and will continue to call, for fundamental reform of the Security Council in order to ensure the representation of Africa. One billion people cannot continue to be denied a voice in this manner.

The lack of progress in finding a durable solution to the Palestinian question and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic's struggle for self-determination remains of major concern for us. It is important that the United Nations carry out its historic mission to ensure that the two longest-standing decolonization and occupation issues are resolved once and for all, in fulfilment of the objectives set forth under the Charter of the United Nations.

The signing of the Paris Agreement last year marked a historic moment in humankind's resolve to minimize the impact of climate change and address the human contribution to it. I would like to take this opportunity to commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the extraordinary leadership that he provided since the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Copenhagen. He was unwavering in his commitment to seeing a legally binding agreement finally agreed to by all. The adoption of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, during the seventeenth Conference of the Parties, was a historic milestone and marked a turning point in the negotiation of a legally binding instrument. It provided a clear road map with targets and deadlines.

On behalf of the people and the Government of South Africa, I would to take this opportunity to salute the outgoing Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for the sterling and outstanding manner in which he steered the affairs of the Organization in the past decade. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

We are pleased that for the first time in the history of the United Nations the General Assembly has been at the centre of the process of finding a new Secretary-General. We believe in a balanced and equal role between the two principal organs of the United Nations on the question of the selection of the Secretary-General. The General Assembly, as the most representative organ, representing all the aspirations of the peoples of the world, should be central in determining the right man or woman to lead the United Nations into the future. The General Assembly cannot be expected just to rubber-stamp decisions of the Security Council. South Africa is particularly supportive of the proposal to limit the term of office of the Secretary-General to a seven-year non-renewable term in order to allow him or her to work without being concerned about reappointment.

South Africa looks forward to working with the President of the General Assembly and other Member States throughout this session.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of South Africa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Slovenia.

Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Pahor: Today, we bear witness to a digital transformation all over the globe. So far, it has been reflected above all in the global economy. However, there is no doubt that, very soon, that transformation will substantially affect every aspect of social life — at the local, regional, and international levels. I was fascinated by the announcement of the United States Department of Labor that 65 per cent

of today's students will be employed in jobs that do not exist at present. It is true that such forecasts are more valid for the most developed countries, but the very essence of the digital transformation is rapidly spreading across the globe.

Be that as it may, such remarkable technological progress should be welcomed. We are filled with hope that, in this way, we can find solutions to unsolved problems. However, like similar changes in the past, today's fourth industrial revolution will bring about new problems and deepen some of the old challenges that humankind is facing.

I will speak first about inequality. Yet the issue of inequality relates not only to the sense of social justice or injustice but increasingly to world peace. Today's world has not yet come to understand, let alone rid itself of, the traditional reasons for the use of force within and between countries. And there is already a new challenge ahead of us, namely, how we should regulate technological progress so that it benefits everyone, and not just a privileged minority. The information revolution has paved the way to a global awareness of social inequalities. I believe that that is one of the main triggers of social conflicts, including in the international community.

The question of legal and any other regulation of the digital transformation is certainly a new issue on the agenda. That also holds true for the most developed countries in the international community. However, the globalization of the digital transformation is occurring so swiftly that it will have to be actively addressed by the United Nations. We will encounter difficulties and obstacles at the beginning, but eventually historic necessity will force us to pool our efforts.

Pooling our efforts in creating effective regulation on climate change proves that we can be successful in our endeavours. It is quite possible that one of the elements of success was the fact that climate change is a major factor of global migration. And as long as migration is not regulated, it will continue to cause the world's paramount security problem. In that sense, migration is yet another catalyst for the international community to find appropriate common solutions.

In any and all contexts, the peaceful resolution of conflicts is absolutely essential. With regard to its fundamental reason for existence, it seems that the United Nations is not effective enough. That should be a further reminder that the Organization ought to adapt to the new circumstances and balance of powers. If the United Nations system is not successful in coping with international conflicts, it risks being sidelined. The use of force as an extreme means of dispute resolution without the necessary endorsement by the United Nations — for example, in the fight against terrorism — risks bringing about the decline of the political and security architecture established after the Second World War.

The next leader of the United Nations is therefore of crucial importance. My country, Slovenia, is proud to have presented Mr. Danilo Türk, our former Head of State and former Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs with a decades-long commitment to the United Nations, as a candidate for that eminent post. I am firmly convinced that he is a strong and credible candidate and that it is time that a Secretary-General came from among the Group of Eastern European States.

I like to present my country as smart, green and of just the right size to be a reference country in many different aspects, but Slovenia also stands for democracy, equality and the peaceful resolution of disputes, and it respects international law and principles. We have built our community of nations on respect for international law and on the protection of individuals and their human rights. If we wish our societies to flourish, such duties must never be far from our minds.

My country is also a strong supporter of effective multilateralism and is among those countries that strive to bring the global community closer to universal respect for human rights, promote respect for international law, strengthen the rule of law, foster preventive diplomacy, particularly in the field of mediation, protect peace and security, promote gender equality, protect the elderly, preserve natural resources, implement sustainable development goals and ensure a decent life for all.

Slovenia will promote these principles within the United Nations, including as a member of the Human Rights Council and a candidate for its presidency in 2018, as a current Chair of the Human Security Network and as a member of various informal groupings within the United Nations, as well as within other regional organizations and groupings of which we are members.

After the truly landmark previous session of the General Assembly, it is now time to start implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which, together with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change,

provides a signpost for and a vision of a more sustainable future for our planet and prosperity for its people.

We will also continue our efforts to have May 20 proclaimed World Bee Day. Our activities during this session of the General Assembly will take place mainly within the context of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and we expect to present a resolution in New York during the Assembly's seventy-second session. We believe that strengthening our common care for bees and other pollinators is needed to ensure food security, biodiversity and sustainable development.

Let me conclude by saying that it was a tremendous privilege to work with the outgoing Secretary-General. I would like to pay tribute to him and to thank him for his determined efforts to promote the United Nations, its values and its goals. We will remember him for his tireless endeavours to make the world a better place. Let us fervently hope that the next Secretary-General will do the same, and even better, for the sake of humanity and of our children and grandchildren.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Slovenia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Al Sisi (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate President Peter Thomson on having assumed the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session and to wish him every success. I would also like to express my gratitude to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly at its previous session, for his efforts and contributions.

The current session of the General Assembly comes in the wake of our launching a new phase in our efforts to achieve comprehensive sustainable development, in its environmental, economic and social dimensions, following our adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (resolution 69/313) on financing for development the previous year.

The aspirations of peoples, particularly in the developing world, to a decent standard of living and ongoing progress are without a doubt our primary responsibility as leaders, entrusted to us by our peoples, in line with the principles of humanity that guide us all. However, the challenges that face developing countries, coupled with their limited capacities, prevent the full realization of the Goals set out in the Agenda. Developing countries are not afforded sufficient opportunity to achieve sustainable development; they require a conducive international environment that provides them with a larger share of international trade, financing mechanisms and the transfer of technology, as well as investment flows and debt settlement. They must also have a national environment that is conducive to development.

Egypt calls for support for the role of the State in order to ensure a balance between the different dimensions of sustainable development, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of social security networks and advancing national ownership of development. Egypt also stresses the importance of harnessing the global monetary system to establish a fair global economic system that provides equal opportunities for development and contributes to minimizing the gap between developed and developing countries. The United Nations is the ideal platform to address this issue. Accordingly, Egypt was among the first 22 States to present a voluntary review of its development plans last July.

Last year we reached an agreement based on the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. As Coordinator of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, I reaffirm Africa's commitment to confronting climate change, within the limits of its capabilities, and its aspiration to put into practice the implementation

mechanisms of the agreement on the transfer of technology and sustainable financing. Egypt has established a track for the Renewable Energy Initiative and presented it in the context of its leadership of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, in implementation of the relevant African Union resolutions.

Egypt wishes to highlight the importance of this initiative in providing support to Africa. Efforts to address climate change must take into consideration equity and the right to development, as well as adherence to the principles of international law, the most important of which is refraining from harm; enhancing cooperation; and the participation of different countries in prospective projects, in accordance with the rules that govern international financial institutions, particularly the World Bank.

The world has become a global village as a result of the positive impact of the communications technology revolution, as well as unimpeded capital flows, investments and global trade. However, we continue to see another facet of globalization, one that has led to a number of social and economic challenges.

Globalization has been linked to an increase in poverty, the expansion of the inequality gap and the undermining of the social contract. These factors combined have exerted pressure on the institutional cohesion of affected countries. These challenges and pressures constitute the greatest incentive for the international community to work diligently to provide State institutions in all countries with the best possible means of undertaking their responsibilities and meeting the needs and aspirations of their peoples.

Amid the challenges facing the international order, the Egyptian people have succeeded in enforcing their will to achieve stability, to protect the State and its institutions and to safeguard their society from fragmentation and chaos. The Egyptian people approved a new Constitution that enshrines the rights and freedoms outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, establishes equality regardless of citizenship and consolidates protection of vulnerable groups, paving the way for women to occupy an unprecedented number of seats in the House of Representatives and expanding its youth representation. The House of Representatives is now actively exercising its legislative authority and oversight responsibilities over the executive authorities.

On the economic front, Egypt is steadily moving forward in implementing an ambitious plan for economic reform that takes into consideration social dimensions and the requisites of a decent livelihood for the Egyptian people. Egypt is also implementing major national projects with an aim of expanding its road network and renewable energy production, as well as increasing agricultural land.

While the Middle East continues to suffer from bloody conflicts, Egypt has managed to preserve its stability in a highly unstable region, thanks to the solidity of its institutions and its people's awareness of their great cultural heritage. The international community must acknowledge and support that fact, to the benefit of the region and the whole world, so that Egypt may continue to act as an anchor of stability in the Middle East, sparing no efforts in carrying out its natural role by working with regional and international parties to restore security and stability in the Middle East.

At the forefront of the bloody conflicts plaguing the region, the agonizing situation in Syria has now reached its sixth year, resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths and millions more internally displaced people and refugees, both within their homeland and in neighbouring countries. Among them are 500,000 Syrians whom Egypt has welcomed as brothers and sisters, providing them with health care, education and housing. The bloodletting in Syria and the absence of any political prospects on the horizon are no longer acceptable.

What is necessary is clear — an immediate and comprehensive halt to all hostilities throughout Syria, thereby paving the way for a political solution that ends the bloodshed and preserves the territorial integrity and security of Syria and its State institutions, as well as realizing the aspirations of Syrians and putting an end to the chaos that has served only to facilitate the proliferation of terrorism. In that regard, we welcome the latest agreement on cessation of hostilities, which was reached as a result of commendable efforts by Russia and the United States. We hope for swift and serious international action to resume negotiations as soon as possible, in order to reach a comprehensive settlement to the crisis.

Within the same context of our troubled region, the Arab-Israeli conflict continues to be the core of regional instability in the Middle East, necessitating joint efforts by the countries of the region and

the international community to reach a final and comprehensive solution to the conflict. Egypt continues to pursue its best efforts to achieve peace in the region and end the Israeli occupation through negotiations and progress in the peace process in order to reach a final settlement as well as sustainable and just peace, on the basis of a two-State solution. We therefore welcome current efforts based on a genuine desire to improve the situation in Palestinian territories, as the Palestinian people continue to suffer from a state of affairs that must be rectified. There should be a focus on ending the occupation and restoring the rights of the Palestinian people through a peace agreement consistent with resolutions of international legitimacy — one that guarantees Palestinians' right to their own State and achieves security for Israel by normalizing relations in the region.

Egypt reiterates that a hand for peace continues to be extended in the form of the Arab Peace Initiative. Egypt also stresses the need to work to take constructive steps to end Israeli settlement-building and to initiate negotiations for a lasting resolution, while simultaneously halting all acts that bring harm to the Arab heritage in Jerusalem.

Allow me to deviate from my written statement — here at this forum, which represents the voice of the world — to address and appeal to Israeli leaders and the Israeli people to consider the need to find a solution to this question. We have a real opportunity to begin a new chapter in the history of our region and to move towards peace. Egypt's inspiring and unique experience can in fact be replicated by solving the Palestinian problem and establishing a Palestinian State alongside the Israeli State, while preserving peace, security and prosperity for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Libya is currently at a dire juncture and in deep political crisis, which has direct implications for Egyptian national security. Despite the progress achieved last year through the signing at Skhirat of the Libyan Political Agreement, there have been difficulties in its implementation. Egypt is playing an active role in bringing the Libyan parties together and supporting the implementation of the Agreement as a means of regaining the unity of the Libyan State and its authority over its territory and allowing it to operate through its legitimate institutions, as represented by the Presidential Council, the National Unity Government, the House of Representatives and the national army.

Egypt is also hosting meetings of our Libyan brothers to facilitate the implementation of the Skhirat Agreement, as well as the establishment of a national unity Government that represent all Libyans and its ratification by the House of Representatives, so that the country can focus on its reconstruction. That in turn would allow the Libyan army to focus on combating terrorism. In that regard, it is necessary to lift the arms embargo imposed on the army. There is no place for terrorism and militias in Libya. The time has come to restore the institutions of the Libyan State.

In Yemen, Egypt is exerting every effort to support Yemeni territorial integrity and security and the return of the legitimate Government. We support the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh, and his plan to resolve the crisis, which has been approved by the legitimate Government. We stress the importance of resuming negotiations and for all parties to declare their commitment to the Special Envoy's plan to reach a comprehensive settlement in Yemen in accordance with Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015). Egypt will continue to support efforts towards a solution and to provide humanitarian assistance to our Yemeni brothers and sisters, in addition to our fundamental role in securing maritime navigation in Bab Al-Mandab and the Red Sea.

The majority of these Arab crises are a reflection of a global state of conflict, and I must reiterate Egypt's rejection of any foreign interference in Arab affairs. I would like to affirm our commitment to the principle of good neighbourliness and to stress Egypt's solidarity with Arab States in facing foreign interventions, in the light of the link between Arab security, including the security of the Arab Gulf.

By the same token, Egypt shoulders its responsibility towards the security and stability of Africa. Egypt currently chairs the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. In that capacity, Egypt is focusing on enhancing cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in terms of growing transnational threats, including terrorism and organized crime. We aim to bring about a shift in addressing conflicts, on the basis of the principle of national leadership and ownership, to ensure the success of peacebuilding efforts. Through its memberships in both the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council, Egypt has been keen to enhance coordination between the two

bodies — something Egypt placed at the forefront of its priorities during its chairmanship of the Council. Egypt has sought to support the Peace and Security Architecture in Africa, in particular by way of efforts to operationalize the African Standby Force. Egypt has also increased its participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions in the region, having regained its place as one of the ten largest contributors.

Egypt calls for the adoption of a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy through an approach that is not limited to security aspects but includes ideological considerations as well. Egypt will host the counter-terrorism centre for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States.

Egypt would also like to highlight the importance of assessing any rising sources of tension, taking into consideration the phenomena of desertification and water scarcity, and the developmental needs related to managing transnational boundaries in connection with water resources.

With regard to situations in the African continent, Egypt stresses the need to provide the Somali Government with support in order to conclude elections. In Burundi, Egypt seeks to find solutions to the political crisis through the African Union Peace and Security Council and through the United Nations Security Council. We are working to address the crisis in the appropriate manner so as to defuse the political situation and allow all the Burundian parties to intensify peaceful political dialogue, thereby averting the use of violence.

Egypt has sought to participate in the regional framework to address the crisis in South Sudan ever since its inception, engaging with the parties to the conflict, as well as regional and international parties, to achieve peace. Through its current chairmanship of the African Peace and Security Council, Egypt is seeking to increase the role of the Council in that regard, as well as to enhance cooperation with the joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Egypt calls for all parties to work within the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan, with the aim of restoring peace to Juba.

Regarding the Republic of the Sudan, Egypt commends the efforts carried out by the Sudanese Government, which have resulted in the signing of the road map proposed by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel last April.

The phenomenon of terrorism and the animus towards the right to life it represents have become an urgent threat to international peace and security. Terrorism constitutes a threat to the entity of the State in favour of extremist ideologies that utilize religion as a veil from behind which to conduct monstrous acts and menace the destinies of peoples. Fighting it requires intensive regional and international cooperation. Egypt has always stressed that the effort to defeat terrorism will never achieve its end unless we address the root causes of the phenomenon, confront terrorist groups with decisiveness and refute the extremist ideologies that give birth to terrorism and its proponents.

I call upon the international community to take all possible measures to prevent terrorism from exploiting advances in information technology, which have contributed to endowing the phenomena of terrorism and ideological extremism with dangerous new dimensions that have given them a global reach. It is essential to end the broadcasting of channels and the hosting of websites that incite violence and extremism.

The world is at a crossroads. Threats to international peace and security are no longer conventional but have rather evolved to constitute a threat to the very tenets of human civilization. In the same vein, the challenges that we face — be they humanitarian, environmental, economic, developmental or health-related — are no longer confined by international borders but have become global. In that regard, I would like to point out that the first preambular paragraph to the Constitution of UNESCO states that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

I assert before the Assembly that terrorism is the cancer of our age, spreading with it the call for extremism and violence in the minds of people. Accordingly, it is our duty to instil in those very same minds the principles of tolerance and coexistence. If culture is the reflection of the principles by which humankind lives, then we must employ culture, technology and knowledge for the benefit of the development of peace.

The United Nations has to give greater attention to addressing the cultural aspects of development and peacemaking and to eliminating destructive ideologies, including through access to knowledge, transfer of technology and confronting extremist ideologies. That must be undertaken in partnership with UNESCO, an organization whose role has grown vastly in importance

in today's world. Egypt recognizes the ever-increasing importance of that role and the importance of taking the utmost advantage of the organization with a view to achieving a better, safer and more understanding world in which there is room for all.

It high time for humankind to reclaim the essence of its humanity, while sharing knowledge and technology without monopolizing them and uniting in the face of challenges. Just as it has always been an eternal accumulation of civilizations, Egypt reaffirms before the General Assembly today its commitment to continuing to contribute to coexistence within the international family and striving for a more secure and prosperous world for our future generations.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Buhari: On behalf of the people and the Government of Nigeria, Sir, let me congratulate the President on his well-deserved election as the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. I assure him of Nigeria's support in steering the affairs of the General Assembly over the next 12 months. I also take this opportunity to express my appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, for the achievements recorded during his tenure.

Last year, I presented my first address to the General Assembly after my assumption of office as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (see A/70/PV.15). Indeed, it was a remarkable year, which not only celebrated the gains of the Millennium Development Goals but also witnessed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These landmark achievements by the global community will without any doubt build a more prosperous, all-inclusive world. We must work together to liberate humankind from poverty, save our planet from the devastation of climate change and rid the world of terrorism for a more peaceful and prosperous future.

We must remain committed to taking bold steps to transform our world. The Sustainable Development Goals underscore the imperative for our collective will towards finding enduring and sustainable solutions to addressing global disparities. It is in the light of our appreciation of the enormity of the task before us that I welcome the theme of the Assembly: "The Sustainable Development Goals: a universal push to transform our world".

Nigeria, as a developing country, has been adversely affected by the global economic downturn. We are, however, undeterred and have embarked upon a wide range of reforms in our efforts to diversify our economy and shift emphasis to mining, agriculture, industrialization, infrastructure development and the creation of an enabling environment for foreign direct investment. Our strategic objective is to stimulate the economy, restore growth and accelerate recovery. In doing that, we are taking measures to reduce the cost of governance and increase expenditure on infrastructure and ensure environmental best practices.

Fighting corruption remains a cardinal pillar of our Administration. Corruption freezes development, thereby undermining the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. I am pleased that our efforts in fighting corruption are yielding positive results, including significant recoveries of stolen assets. The recovered funds are being channelled towards the development of critical infrastructure and the implementation of social inclusion programmes for our people. We are also strengthening the capacity of Government entities to institutionalize reforms to ensure transparency and good governance.

The Anti-Corruption Summit held in London in May this year served as further assurance of the global community's commitment to fight corruption through the proposed practical steps to address the challenges, including actions to hold perpetrators to justice within

the law. Nigeria supports the development of an international legal framework to enforce anti-corruption measures and strengthen existing international institutions to effectively deal with corrupt practices.

Nigeria calls on Member States that are yet to sign up to the United Nations Convention against Corruption to do so. Nigeria will continue to advocate for the facilitation of the recovery of illicit financial assets. Indeed, the speedy and unconditional return of stolen public assets should be the focus of the follow-up anti-corruption conference, to be hosted by the United States and United Kingdom next year in Washington, D.C.

Furthermore, Nigeria remains committed to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, a global coalition that promotes transparency and accountability in the management of revenues from the oil, gas and solid minerals sectors. We voluntarily signed up to the Initiative because we are convinced that transparent governance is an imperative for resource-rich developing countries like ours. Through the work that our national chapter of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative has done over the years, it is clear that our faith is not misplaced. The Initiative has been empowering citizens with the critical information they can use to hold Government and other players in the extractive industries to account, and make recommendations that drive reforms in those strategic sectors of our national life.

The world took a giant step in Paris towards addressing the challenges of climate change. Nigeria is proud to have been part of the process leading to the adoption of the Paris Agreement in December 2015 at the twenty-first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. That meeting marked a watershed in the global community's commitment to address climate change, and we will continue in our determined efforts to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. At the centre of Nigeria's climate action is our determination to implement the strategies in our intended nationally determined contributions, which will foster a low-carbon economy and sustainable growth in building a climate-resilient society. We are creating public awareness through the integrated involvement of the private sector and civil society and by strengthening national institutions and mechanisms.

The negative consequences of climate change have manifested themselves in the drying up of our Lake Chad. The means of livelihood of an estimated 30 million inhabitants of the Lake Chad Basin — spread across Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria — are being severely threatened. The cost of replenishing the lake has been put at $14 billion, under a five-year plan that should be accorded global attention. Nigeria also supports the African Union initiative on the Great Green Wall to halt desertification.

In furtherance of our commitment to environmental sustainability, Nigeria has launched the Clean Up Ogoniland initiaitve in Nigeria's Niger Delta, based on the 2011 environmental assessment of the area by the United Nations Environment Programme. Multinational oil companies operating in the area will be required to live up to their corporate social responsibilities and contribute to the cleaning-up of the environment, degraded as a result of their activities and operations. We call on development partners and multinationals to support our efforts through the Ogoniland Restoration Fund.

The twenty-first century has thus far been marked by the rising insecurity unleashed by global terrorism and violent extremism, which constitute a real threat to the international community. With the global increase in the spate of terrorist attacks, there is now, more than ever, international consensus and greater willingness to collaborate in combating the threat. Indeed, we are meeting at the time when our hosts, the American people, have just marked the fifteenth anniversary of the tragic and dastardly terrorist attacks on their soil. We in Nigeria, having been victims of terrorism ourselves, fully understand the impact of 9/11 on the American psyche and the families of the thousands of innocent victims whose lives were lost that day. I therefore reiterate the sympathies of the Nigerian Government and the Nigerian people to the American people, along with prayers for the families of the victims that they may heal and find closure soon.

We hope that justice will be done for the families of victims of 9/11, as indeed to the victims of terror everywhere, in conformity with the norms of international justice. As we seek justice for terrorism victims, the international community should avoid reacting in the heat of the deep emotions of the moment by taking unilateral measures, legal or otherwise, that will have a negative and disruptive impact on the international community's collective efforts to fight

terrorism. We should not be distracted in our collective resolve to beat back terrorism in all its forms.

As we confront terrorism, we must also commit to stopping the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which nurtures its spread. To that end, Nigeria urges Member States that are yet to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty to do so without further delay.

Nigeria has made remarkable progress in its resolve to defeat Boko Haram, whose capacity to launch orchestrated attacks as a formed group has been severely degraded. In the past few months, their operations have been limited to sporadic use of improvised explosive devices against soft targets.

Nigeria has continued to combat terrorism on the basis of the established rules of engagement and in conformity with international best practices. I take this opportunity to reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to human rights norms and international humanitarian law in our efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism. I also wish to restate the assurance that the Federal Government of Nigeria is employing all its judicial tools to investigate and address reported cases of human rights violations.

I commend the contributions of our neighbours — the Republic of Benin, the Republic of Cameroon, the Republic of Chad and the Republic of the Niger — whose combined efforts under the Multinational Joint Task Force accomplished the present return of normalcy in areas hitherto occupied by Boko Haram. May I also thank our international partners — including France, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union — and many other multilateral and bilateral partners for their invaluable support. Our experience today is proof that, with determined international collaboration, terrorism can be defeated.

The flow of refugees and migrants worldwide has reached alarming proportions. That is why Nigeria supports the ceasefire agreement brokered by the United States and Russia to end the atrocious tragedy of the Syrian civil war. Of particular concern to us in Nigeria is the plight of internally displaced persons resulting from Boko Haram's terrorism. We have taken concrete steps to address their humanitarian needs and to ensure that the necessary conditions are established to enable the voluntary return of the displaced persons to their places of abode in safety and dignity.

At the same time, the Palestinian issue, despite years and years of international efforts, is no nearer to being resolved. Nigeria, in company with States members of the African Union, firmly supports the two-State solution, with Palestinian rights to statehood in conformity with numerous Security Council resolutions, beginning with resolution 242 (1967).

Let me take this opportunity to once again thank all United Nations and other aid agencies and development partners currently deployed in north-east Nigeria. I reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to collective action towards an effective global response to address the root causes of refugee flows worldwide.

We acknowledge the importance of youth in national development and remain committed to harnessing the potential of the increasing youth bulge. We must take advantage of the numbers and creative energy of young people, who are in the majority in Nigeria and in most other Member States. Therefore, at the international level, we call for the establishment of a specialized United Nations agency for youth development to achieve that strategic objective.

Nuclear security remains central to our quest for durable peace and security. That was why I participated in the fifth Nuclear Security Summit, hosted by President Barak Obama in Washington in March 2016. Nigeria and the other peace-loving States Members of the United Nations must continue to uphold the fundamental principles of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The United Nations should now redouble the long-protracted effort for its reform to enable it to effectively address the challenges of our times. Nigeria therefore reiterates its call for the reform of the Security Council, in particular to reflect equitable and fair representation and greater transparency, legitimacy and inclusiveness in its decision-making. Africa should be adequately represented on the Security Council in the permanent-member category. In that regard, Nigeria stands ready to serve Africa and the world on a reformed Security Council to advance international peace and security.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Nigeria's abiding faith in the United Nations and in its capacity to support Member States to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Museveni: I would like to congratulate the President on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session.

The theme for this session is "The Sustainable Development Goals: a universal push to transform our world". This is a good topic. It adds another nail in the coffin of the old parasitic arrangement where only a small portion of humankind — those living in the United States of America, Canada, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand — lived in affluence while the rest of the world lived in abject poverty.

The reasoning then was that one could not be affluent without doing so at the expense of somebody else. This logic has now been challenged. Between 1981 and 2010, 380 million and 270 million people in China and India, respectively, came out of poverty. Even in Africa, a continent with a lot of accumulated disadvantages, 414 million people have come out of poverty. In Uganda's case, in 2004 56 per cent of its people were living in poverty. Today that figure is 19 per cent. It is hoped that by 2017, it will be reduced to 10 per cent.

Is the world not a better place with the spread of affluence? Have not the old affluent societies and the new ones both benefited? The United States is today exporting goods and services to China worth $120 billion per year. The European Union is exporting goods and services to China worth $356 billion. Has not the spread of affluence benefited more people?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) understood this very well. There are 17 of them, and they are: to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, to end hunger, to ensure healthy lives, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, to achieve gender equality and so forth. I do not have to read out all 17 SDGs because representatives know them.

All this is a different way of providing a prescription for the problems of underdevelopment. We are happy at last. The global agenda includes most of the ingredients necessary for growth and the transformation of societies, as happened in the past for those societies that pioneered the Industrial Revolution. In particular, the inclusion of energy on the list of SDGs is a departure from past global agendas.

These SDGs fluctuate with many of our own 10 strategic bottlenecks. These are ideological disorientation; a weak State, especially the army, which needed restructuring; the suppression of the private sector; the underdevelopment of human resources, that is, a lack of education and health; the underdevelopment of infrastructure, that is, the railways, roads, electricity, telephones and piped water and so forth; a small internal market; the lack of industrialization; the underdevelopment of the services sector; the underdevelopment of agriculture and the attack on democracy.

As the Assembly can see, there are two crucial bottlenecks that are missing in the SDGs. These are ideological disorientation, which for us is bottleneck number one, and market integration, which is bottleneck number six. One can of course say that the idea of ideological disorientation is subsumed in SDG 16 — that of peace, justice and strong institutions. Nevertheless, there is no harm in singling out and highlighting this problem of the pseudo-ideology that exploits the identities of people — of religion, tribe, race, gender and so forth — and eclipses the interests of the people, such as balanced trade. That equal relationship between the producer of a good and the producer of a service and the buyer of the same, both in ancient and modern times, is the greatest stimulus for global prosperity.

This, however, is many times eclipsed by the shallow promotion of the chauvinism of religion, tribe, race or gender, even when one's religion mates, tribe

mates and race mates are doing nothing or little for one's prosperity. Yet the recent growth through trade of China, India and so forth in their interaction with the United States of America, the European Union, Africa and so forth shows the power of the stimulus. Let the global body therefore understand and blacklist the pseudo-ideology of the sectarianism and chauvinism of groups. All the past mistakes and the present ones are linked to this problem. Imperialism, the slave trade, colonialism, neocolonialism, the ongoing sectarian conflicts in many parts of the world — all, in one way or another, spring from this pseudo-ideology. The fair and authentic ideology of being my brother's keeper, as it says in the Book of Genesis — chapter 4, verse 9 — is the true antidote to this poison. Abandon all forms of chauvinism and the world will be safer for everybody. In my dialect we say, "The one who shoots arrows at others should expect arrows to come his way".

Finally, our sixth bottleneck — the bottleneck of fragmented markets in Africa and possibly in other places — should also be addressed. It has eased its trade with China, with India, with the United States, with Russia, with Brazil and Indonesia, because they are markets of $1.3 billion, $1.2 billion, $150 million, $200 million and $200 million, respectively, because they are societies under one political authority each. We and the others that have fragmented markets must struggle to rectify this deficiency.

Mr. Zamora Rivas (El Salvador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In Africa, we are already moving forward. Hence, our East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Southern African Development Community, the Economic Community of West African States and, ultimately, the common market of the whole of Africa, as we agreed recently, in Kigali. These markets are taking us in the right direction. Remember that when I buy what is produced by your factories, I am supporting your prosperity; and when you buy what I produce, you are supporting my prosperity. Long live the SDGs. But, please, do not forget to add the bottlenecks that we observed here.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Uganda for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.